

## Get out of your own Way

“Sadly, beating the crap out of our dreams is often our greatest talent.”

– author unknown

Last night I had a lucid dream. In the dream, I’m at a large outdoor concert. Thousands of people are there and most are cheering loudly, dizzy with anticipation. The crowd is so large that I can’t see the stage let alone the performer. Suddenly, music begins to swell and the crowd goes wild. I’m not sure what I’m about to experience, but I know it’s significant. Try as I might, I can’t see the stage. My attempts to elbow through the crowd are unsuccessful – constantly thwarted by the gentleman in front of me. He’s everywhere I want to be and always in the way. I try asking him politely to move, but he appears not to hear me. I tap him on the shoulder but he ignores me. Exasperated, I grab him by the arm and spin him around. I’m left speechless. The person blocking my view, always in my way and ignoring my protests is me.

We often like to think that someone or something stands in the way of our success – that some external force stymies our best efforts. In more cases than not, our lack of success is an internal force initiated by the person who stares back at us from the mirror each morning. What prevents us from putting ourselves out there is often our lack of personal faith – our poor self-esteem. It all comes down to fear. Though the two phrases have become almost cliché in our self-help world, both remain legitimate: the fear of failure and fear of success.

Let’s look first at fear of failure. Many of us have a misguided belief that should we attempt something great and fail we will be forever judged and found lacking – condemned by others around us. “Look, there’s that loser who tried to (insert dream) and had it blow up in his face.” I used to believe that, but I don’t any longer. Here’s the cold, hard truth: most people couldn’t care less. They’re too busy with their own lives to be overly concerned about what you may or may not have attempted. Here’s another truth: the greatest critic you’ll ever face is yourself. Are there critical people out there? Sure. In the words of spiritual speaker and writer, Michael Bernard Beckwith, “Be willing to give up the people of mediocrity who try to take you down.”

I think fear of success is even more insidious. It was in my case. Get this: I actually believed at some deep level that I was fully capable of enjoying tremendous success in the career of my

choosing. I could actually see myself speaking, writing, teaching – flourishing in all the things I claimed I wanted to accomplish. So what was the hang-up? I had spent most of my life building a “poor me” mentality and had gleefully shared the news with anyone who would listen. When friends said, “Oh poor you,” I would nod and cast my eyes downward. Secretly, I was reveling in the attention. I wanted people to feel sorry for me, to make allowances for me, to think they should be extra nice and not hold me too accountable because I was such a darned poor/pitiful guy. What a bunch of crap! I was living in a place of fear, afraid to let go of my safety net of pity and co-dependency. I was reluctant to leave behind my fellow “poor me” affiliates. You know, the people of mediocrity – the ones trying to take me back down to a place of fear and protection. I was afraid to leave behind the old comfortable me – the worst affiliate of the bunch.

To further draw on the words of spiritual teacher and speaker, Michael Bernard Beckwith, “Can you handle success? Can you handle being magnificent? Can you handle greatness? Can you handle what they’re going to say about you when you begin to have your light shine a little brighter? Can you handle mediocrity attacking your excellence when it starts to flow through you? Can you handle all the stuff that comes when you start to really shine and break from mediocrity – or what comes at you when that takes place? Can you say yes to that? Are you willing to give up the people of mediocrity who are going to try to take you down?”

I haven’t seen those folks much lately. Truth is, I don’t really miss them. I’m too busy getting out of my own way and approaching life with love and gratitude. Who is standing in your way?